The Volunteer Program

Jill A. Maher

The second decade of the Volunteer Program has opened with an extraordinarily busy year. Started in 1966 by Mrs. John Livin-good, the Volunteer Program finds, trains, and schedules volunteers who work half a day per week as Museum docents or Suq docents. Museum docents give tours of the Museum to school and other groups and welcome visitors to the Institute. Suq docents work in the museum shop which offers the visitor an outstanding selection of Near Eastern jewelry, museum reproductions, and books. Income from the shop has grown under the capable management of Mrs. Ruth Marcanti and is a welcome addition to the funds of the Institute. Oriental Institute volunteers are usually the only staff the visitor meets, and volunteers serve as an important link between the scholarly work of the Institute and the public. During the time the Tutankhamun exhibit was in Chicago, the
number of visitors to the Museum increased enormously, at times up to 300 people an hour. The volunteers added an information table to the lobby where they dispensed aid and comfort to visitors, advising them on bus routes and eating places as well as archeology. While the Treasures of Tutankhamun were on display at the Field Museum, fifteen of our docents gave time there in addition to their regular duties at the Institute.

Training to be a docent is rigorous. In addition to extensive reading the volunteers must attend a course of lectures and gallery talks and prepare a written outline of the Museum collection. This year the faculty and staff members, docents, and graduate students who kindly gave their time to the training program were: Linn Buss, Peter Dorman, Judith Franke, McGuire Gibson, David Nasgowitz, Peter Piccione, Emily Teeter, Mary Ann Wayne, and Don Whitcomb.

There has been a special program or lecture for docents each month of the year. Doris Shayne, Docent, spoke on the spread of art motifs throughout the Ancient Near East; Frank Yurco gave an illustrated lecture on the work of the Epigraphic Survey; Acting Curator Judith Franke introduced the docents to the new Mesopotamian Gallery in several sessions; David Nasgowitz, Assistant Curator, gave the docents a five-hour refresher course in the old galleries; Richard Zettler, Assistant Director of the Nippur Expedition, discussed the work of the last season, and I followed with slides showing less technical aspects of the dig; Paul Zimansky gave an illustrated talk on the little known kingdom of Urartu; three slide talks on the tomb of Tutankhamun were presented by Eugene Cruz-Uribe, Peter Piccione, and Ann Roth; and finally, Emily Teeter toured the Museum's new exhibit, The Magic of Egyptian Art, with the docents. A class in Akkadian, the language of the Assyrians and Babylonians, has been meeting once a week since January with Robert Whiting. To these generous friends and teachers the volunteers express their thanks.

For our spring party the volunteers gathered outside the Field Museum early one May morning for a private viewing of the Treasures of Tutankhamun, followed by a breakfast party.

The funds for volunteer parking, Xeroxing, and routine expenses were obtained through the luncheon program: groups of twenty or more people can arrange lunch at the Quadrangle Club through the Volunteer Office. This year many hundreds of visitors took advantage of this service.

Margaret Grant, Assistant Chairman of the Volunteer Program, wrote and distributed a lively monthly newsletter which was snapped up by Institute staff members as well as docents. I wish
to thank her for her outstanding contribution to the program in all her many roles. Others gave special help in the Volunteer Office—Linn Buss, Edith Engel, and Mary Ann Wayne—and I am grateful.

Our volunteer corps is now a diverse group including students, housewives, retired engineers, and business executives. The volunteers have become an integral part of the Oriental Institute, and we warmly invite other members to join us.

Volunteers of the Oriental Institute 1976/77

Mrs. Mychal Angelos, Cary
Mrs. Margaret Arvey, Chicago
Mrs. Herbert Barghusen, Chicago
Mrs. Helmut Baum, Chicago
Mrs. Cameron Brown, Lake Forest
Mrs. Ralph Burhoe, Chicago
Mrs. Onno Buss, La Grange Park
Mr. Leonard Byman, Chicago
Mrs. G.A. Christopher, Crete
Mrs. Yvonne Cooper, Chicago
Mr. Tom Corbett, Chicago
Mr. James Czarnik, Chicago
Mrs. J. R. DePencier, Chicago
Mrs. Mary d'Ouville, Evergreen Park
Ms. Lynette Dray, Chicago
Mr. Milton Droege, La Grange
Mrs. Susan Duda, Chicago
Miss Evelyn Dyba, Chicago
Mrs. David Easton, Chicago
Mrs. Phillip Elmes, Chicago
Mrs. Thomas Enck, Chicago
Mrs. Edith Engel, Flossmoor
Mrs. Hy Fish, Chicago
Ms. Shirley Jean Fisher, Chicago
Mrs. James Ford, Chicago
Mrs. Barbara Frey, Chicago
Mrs. Terry Friedman, Chicago
Mrs. Harold Futransky, Skokie
Mrs. Isak Gerson, Chicago
Mrs. Kay Ginther, Chicago
Mrs. Natalie Goldberg, Chicago
Mrs. Susan Goldhamer, Chicago
Mrs. Robert Grant, Chicago
Mrs. Stacey Greenberger, Evanston
Mrs. Ernest Grunsfeld, Highland Park

Mr. Albert Haas, Chicago
Mrs. Albert Haas, Chicago
Mrs. Donald Hamrin, Chicago
Mrs. Teresa Hintzke, Evanston
Mrs. Harry Hoffner, Oak Park
Mrs. Janet Hurwich, Lincolnwood
Mrs. A. Imberman, Hinsdale
Mrs. Edwin Irons, Chicago
Mrs. Henry Irwin, Chicago
Mrs. Jo Jackson, Chicago
Mrs. Victor Jackson, Chicago
Mrs. Janet Jentes, Chicago
Miss Lenore John, Chicago
Mrs. Alan Katz, Evanston
Mrs. Spencer Kimball, Chicago
Mrs. Suzanne Krill, Chicago
Mrs. Jill Maher, Chicago
Mrs. Elsa Maynard, Chicago
Mrs. Bette Miller, Ingleside
Ms. Doralee Miller, Glen Ellyn
Mrs. J. Mulberry, Chicago
Mrs. Miodrag Nedic, Chicago
Mrs. Otto Nerad, River Forest
Mrs. A. Olsen, Chicago
Mrs. Ronald Orner, Highland Park
Mrs. Gloria Orwin, Chicago
Mrs. Jo Ann Putz, Oak Lawn
Mrs. Chester Riehle, Monee
Mrs. Alan Reinstein, Highland Park
Mrs. Ronald Rogers, Park Forest
Mrs. Homer Rosenberg, Highland Park
Ms. Janet Russell, Chicago
Mrs. Marion Salmon, Clarendon Hills
Mrs. Barbara Sansone, Western Springs
Mrs. Robert Schloerb, Chicago
Mrs. Mary Schulman, Chicago  
Mrs. Doris Shayne, Chicago  
Mrs. Karen Shymkus, Crete  
Mrs. Gertrude Silberman, Chicago  
Mrs. K. S. Singwi, Winnetka  
Mrs. Daniel Smith, Chicago  
Mr. Keith Smith, Chicago  
Mrs. Peter Spiegel, Chicago  
Mrs. Margaret Strandjord, Chicago  
Mrs. Clement Studebaker, Chicago  
Mrs. Opel Sucharetza, Chicago  

Mrs. Gustavus Swift, Chicago  
Ms. Jeannette Thompson, Chicago  
Mrs. Kenneth Watson, Chicago  
Mrs. Mary Anne Wayne, Chicago  
Mrs. Merna Wechsler, Highland Park  
Mrs. Winsor White, Chicago  
Mrs. Charles Winans, Chicago  
Mrs. Rosalinde Vorne, Chicago  
Mrs. Walter Zurne, Chicago